

Testimony of Luis Rivera, Volunteer Coordinator  
Connecticut Community for Addiction Recovery  
Bridgeport Recovery Community Center  
March 2, 2010

Good Morning/Afternoon, Senator Doyle, Representative Walker and distinguished members of the Human Services committee. I am Luis Rivera, Volunteer Coordinator, for Connecticut Community for Addiction Recovery (CCAR). I oversee the Bridgeport Recovery Community Center's volunteer initiatives. I am here today to express concerns about **H.B. 5243 An Act Concerning Sober Homes**.

CCAR has been an advocate for the recovery community since 1999. Through providing important Recovery Support Services and education we promote awareness, as well as assist men and women with alcohol and or drug addiction sustain and enhance their personal recovery. Recovery housing has been one of the most beneficial services utilized by persons in recovery. I have seen many people strive in their recovery through having safe sober housing. Recovery housing has enabled individuals to pursue treatment, attend support groups, and find employment while establishing themselves in their community. Through the efforts of the Recovery House Coalition the standards of recovery housing have been continuously addressed and modified to better meet the needs of recoverees.

As a person in recovery who has found a safe haven through recovery housing I know firsthand that sober housing helps support people who come back into the community that may not necessarily have anywhere else to go. I received recovery housing after being discharged from treatment with nowhere to live. It was suggested by the treatment provider that rather than returning to the people, places, and things I was involved with during active addiction, I make changes in my life. Recovery housing afforded me a unique opportunity to take action. Through the support and encouragement made available to me at a sober house I have built a support system, and formed a recovery support network which over the long term has enabled me to sustain my recovery, reunite with my children, become employed, pay taxes, and be a productive member of society.

I want to thank you for the opportunity to address this committee with my concerns. Please do not put in place a statute that may well jeopardize access to housing for persons striving to recover their lives and become productive members of society. Please consider working with DMHAS, the Recovery Housing Coalition of CT and the recovery community to accommodate community needs. Thank you